



CONSERVING THE GEMS OF UPPER BALEH KAPIT, SARAWAK

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JONGKAR GRINANG
CINDY PETER
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Main sponsor



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Published in Malaysia by
UNIMAS Publisher,
Universiti Malaysia Sarawak,
94300 Kota Samarahan,
Sarawak, Malaysia.

Printed in Malaysia by
Lee Ming Press Sdn Bhd ^(541980-U)
No. 48, Jalan Ellis,
93300 Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia.

Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia

Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

Gabriel Tonga Noweg

CONSERVING THE GEMS OF UPPER BALEH KAPIT, SARAWAK /

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ISBN 978-967-2008-97-2

1. National park and reserves--Malaysia--Taman Negara Hulu Baleh (Sarawak).
2. Conservation of natural resources--Malaysia--Taman Negara Hulu Baleh (Sarawak).
3. Biodiversity--Malaysia--Taman Negara Hulu Baleh (Sarawak).
4. Government publications--Malaysia.
I. Jongkar Grinang. II. Cindy Peter.
III. Lip, Belinda Hun Mei. IV. Michael Ngelai.
V. Aisah Eden. VI. Jiwari Abdullah.
VII. Mohamad Irwan Aman. VIII. Andrew Alek Tuen.
IX. Title.

333.720959522

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The fruiting Ensurai tree (Dipterocarpus oblongifolius) is important for semah and empurau (Tor spp.).



FOREWORD



I am glad to note that this book is timely in commemorating UNIMAS's 25 years of commitment towards excellence in its research niches: Biodiversity and Environmental Conservation; Information Communication and Creative Technology; Sustainable Community Transformation. As such, I would like to congratulate everyone who has been involved directly or indirectly in producing this book.

I must compliment the efforts by the authors in presenting the outputs of the Upper Baleh Scientific Expedition in the form of a coffee table book. I must also acknowledge the commitment of the contributors in providing the materials for this book. To my knowledge, the scientific findings of the expedition are also published in the local journals. While the journal papers serve as reference primarily for scientific communities, this colourful book with concise descriptions will be interesting reading material for a general audience.

Many people were involved in the Scientific Expedition to Upper Baleh in 2015. Specifically, I must acknowledge Sarawak Energy Berhad, Forest Department Sarawak and WWF-Malaysia for the collaborative work with UNIMAS in making the scientific expedition a success. I hope collaborative research in exploring and documenting Sarawak's biodiversity among the institutions will be continued.

Prof Datuk Dr Mohamad Kadim bin Suaidi
Vice Chancellor
Universiti Malaysia Sarawak

PREFACE

The State Government of Sarawak has declared 2.7 million hectares as an area for conservation and sustainable development under the Heart of Borneo (HoB) Initiative. The forest of Upper Baleh River in Kapit Division has been proposed as national park within the HoB which encompasses an area of 66,721 ha, bordering West Kalimantan, Indonesia. The national park is important for wildlife connectivity to protect species of flora and fauna and their natural habitats within the region. The area, being the headwater area for Baleh River, is also significant for the development of hydroelectric power by Sarawak Energy Berhad, providing water security to generate hydroelectric power. In line with the significant functions of Upper Baleh, four agencies, the Forest Department Sarawak, World Wide Fund for Nature Malaysia (WWF-Malaysia), Sarawak Energy Berhad and Universiti Malaysia Sarawak conducted a two-week expedition to the area in November 2015 to gather baseline information to support the gazettelement of the park and a catchment management plan.

Conserving the Gems of Upper Baleh is an appropriate title for this book, as it aims to share some of the outstanding findings of the expedition that highlights the unique biodiversity and importance of the area for conservation. We would also like to acknowledge Ms. Cynthia Chin and Jason Hon of WWF-Malaysia, and Indraneil Das for their constructive comments on the draft, and UNIMAS Publisher, the designer Mr. Mohamad Nazri Mario, Mr. Abang Zainuddin Abang Haji Sharkawi and Dr Jane Labadin for their inputs in making this book an enjoyable one.

The Editors



*A night shot showing the beauty of wildlife – this is a Dring's Dwarf Litter Frog (*Leptobrachella juliandringi*).*